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Take a TIME-OUT

BY WINSTON J. CRAIG

*Periods of rest are
essential to health
of body and mind.*

The human body is not powered like the Energizer Bunny. Any system of the human body that is overworked or excessively stressed without appropriate rest will soon fatigue. A muscle used excessively can cramp and lose function, just like a computer crashing. The brain that is constantly working without rest and with no time to recharge its batteries will soon fatigue and lose full power.

Fatigue limits the ability of our brain to think clearly, make accurate judgments, be creative, and plan effectively. People experiencing fatigue are more likely to express negative attitudes, and are more prone to anger and depression. Fatigue increases your risk of accidents and mistakes, and decreases your level of efficiency.

During World War II, the British sped up production of war materials. Factories went to a 74-hour work week. However, because the factory workers were not properly rested, their morale fell and accidents increased. Records revealed they actually worked only 66 hours per week.

The factory owners decided to reduce work hours to 48 hours a week with a mandatory one-day rest weekly. To their surprise, production went up 15 percent even though they worked fewer hours. Furthermore, morale improved, absenteeism dropped, spoiled work decreased, and there were fewer accidents. Regular rest and eliminating fatigue made the difference.

Some professional sports have a number of time-outs during the game so players can regroup and plan a new game strategy. In like manner, we all need to regularly take

a break, regain our focus, and revise our life strategy. The time-out can be short periods during the day, an annual vacation, or one day weekly for reflection. The rhythmic pattern of resting one day a week is an ancient idea. The Sabbath was God's gift to the human race to preserve life and promote spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional health.

A regular period of rest and relaxation ensures freshness and vitality. Periods of rest are actually essential to the health of the body and mind (see *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 7, p. 247). In our stress-filled, busy lives we really need some downtime. Christ recommended we regularly take a time-out (Mark 6:31). Those bearing heavy loads are invited to experience true rest by spending some quality time with Him (Matt 11:28-30).

Winston Craig is professor of nutrition at Andrews University.

**Regular rest ensures
freshness and vitality.**